



PAṬICCA-SAMUPPĀDA

Antecedental Concurrence

(Parts 2 & 3)



Ven. Dr M. Punnañi Maha Thera

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Today we're going to deal with the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*", and in dealing with the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*", I have been telling you that we are talking about a series of antecedence. Now antecedence means one thing comes before the other; a series of antecedence. And in these series of antecedence, one coming after the other, although it is a series of antecedence, they all happening at the same time; this is the other thing about it. So it is not happening in time; time it's not the basis of this "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*", time is the result of the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*"; both space and time come out of the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*". So the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*" is not based on time, so we cannot speak about the past, present, and future that started the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*". Because earlier we were saying that the World is created by our own Mind; the World is not created by someone outside.

We are not doing the creation because even the "I" has been created by this process called "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*". So the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*" simply means Determinism; Determinism means that everything that occurs in the World is determined by the presence of the Necessary Condition. When the Necessary Condition is present then it happens. No one is doing it; it is happening. So it is because of this happening, where no one is doing it, that the Mind that we are thinking of, it's doing it without our doing it. There is no "I" to do it. This is the most important thing to understand because most people think there must be some "I" here to do things; that is the idea of free will. There is no free will here. Everything is determined by the presence of the Necessary Conditions. Everything that happens in the World is determined by the presence of the Necessary Conditions. That is the important thing to understand.

Now in order to understand this we have to understand that it is by understanding this series of antecedence that the Buddha became a Buddha. Buddha became a Buddha means, the Buddha means the Awakened One, One who has awakened from the Dream of Existence. We are dreaming that we are existing, so when the Buddha awoke from that Dream, that Awakening was achieved by understanding this working of the Mind, so that is the meaning of becoming a Buddha. So to become a Buddha we have to understand that. But in becoming a Buddha, the Bodhisattva or Prince Siddhartha who went to meditate, had to go through this first "*Jhāna*", second "*Jhāna*", third "*Jhāna*", fourth "*Jhāna*", then the Realm of Infinite Space, the Realm of Infinite Perception, Realm of Nothingness, the Realm of Neither Sensation Nor No Sensation, and the Cessation of Sensation and Feeling: "*Saññā vedayita nirodha*". Now those things I don't have to start talking about it again because we have already discussed this, so I am only mentioning these things, so that it will help you to understand the "*Paṭicca-Samuppāda*".

Now what the Buddha really did was he gradually stopped what is called the Mind. Now I said the Mind is not an entity like the body, body is an entity that occupies space and time. The Mind is not an entity, the Mind is an activity. An activity is something that can be stopped. So this Mind as an activity was stopped. But you can't stop it suddenly; it has to be stopped gradually. So this stopping of the Mind is the meaning of "*Samādhi*". "*Samādhi*" is a gradual stopping of that activity called Mind.

The activity that we are all having is that Emotional Excitement; that is the activity that we are having in our Emotional World that we are living in. We are living in an Emotional World. And so we are emotionally agitated all the time; this is what today people cause "Stress"; that Stress has to be stopped.

So when the Emotion has been stopped, that Emotional Activity has been stopped, we enter the first "*Jhāna*". What is called entering the first "*Jhāna*" means stopping that Emotional Activity, which comes in the form of Five Hindrances: the desire for sensual pleasure, the anger, the depression, then worries and anxieties, and the mind being divided into two, going in two different directions; now all that is the activity called Emotion. When that Emotion or the Emotional Activity has stopped, you enter the first "*Jhāna*", and in that first "*Jhāna*", that emotional activity is absent but the thinking is going on, thinking is pure thinking, not emotional thinking. And then you also begin to feel happiness, the happiness of selflessness, not the selfish happiness, this is the answer to happiness, and with that comes comfort because the body relaxes and you feel comfortable. The feeling of comfort comes from relaxation of the body; there are no tensions in the body, and the Mind is undisturbed; it is tranquil, that tranquility of the Mind, that is the first "*Jhāna*".

And you enter the second "*Jhāna*", the thinking part stops. There is no thinking in the second "*Jhāna*", but still you have that happiness, comfort, and the stillness of the Mind.

When you enter the third '*Jhāna*', the happiness disappears because at that point happiness is seen as a disturbance. And so that Mind becomes calm, so that happiness stops.

And when you enter the fourth "*Jhāna*", the comfort also disappears that doesn't mean you become uncomfortable, but comfort means again a slight disturbance, and that also stops. So there is a complete stillness of mind in the fourth "*Jhāna*".

Now these "*Jhānas*" we call Ecstasy; Ecstasy means standing out; standing out of what, standing out of the emotional life. It's a gradual standing out of the Emotional Life, so when you come to the fourth "*Jhāna*", you have completely come out of the Emotional Life, so that is the standing out. So it is very important to understand that when you reach the fourth "*Jhāna*", you have come out of the Emotional Life completely.

Now the next is, the next step is, although the Emotional Life has stopped, there is what is called The Thinking part: the Cognitive part. Now what is remaining is not the thinking because the thinking is stopped when we enter the second "*Jhāna*". What remains is simply perception, that means we can see things or hear things, but we don't think "what is this", and then we don't try to draw conclusion. Even if you see something, you don't ask the question what is this and then draw a conclusion.

But once you pass the fourth "*Jhāna*", even that seeing objects has stopped, you don't see anything, then what do you see, what you see is Empty Space, you're seeing only Empty Space. And when you see Empty Space, then you take your attention away from Empty Space also, then what are you left with, you are left with just the seeing, which is Perception. There is Perception without any objects seen, not even Empty Space. So your focus is on the "seeing" itself. You are "seeing" the "seen"; you are "perceiving" the "perceiving". Now these are difficult things to understand, but at least if you know that this is what it is that is enough.

Then you take your attention away from that "seeing" also, and what are you left with, you're left with "Nothing". But you are aware of Nothingness, that being aware of Nothingness is still there, so the object there becomes Nothingness. Then you try to reduce that also, and when you reduce that you're left with a situation where you see there is "Neither Sensation, Nor No Sensation". It is what I call the threshold of Perception. Threshold means like going to the door, where you're at the door, now your next step is to get out. You're getting out of the Cognitive Process.

Now I told you these are all Processes of Activity that is there. What we call the Mind is the Activity. So one Activity is the Process of Cognition; the other Activity is the Emotional Activity. Now the Emotional Activity was stopped first, and then the Cognitive Activity is stopped after that. So the next step is the complete stopping of that Activity which is Cognition. And when that activity has stopped, the activity called Mind has completely stopped, and when the activity called Mind has stopped, what is left, there is no Mind. Are you conscious of anything? There is no consciousness at all, and that absence of all Consciousness is what is called "*Avijjā*", and today translated as ignorance; that is not the ignorance, that is Unconsciousness because you're not conscious at all, so the real Unconsciousness is at that point.

But today what most people call Unconscious is just where there is no Perception of the World when that is even before you enter the first "*Jhāna*", you're conscious of the World. And when you get into the first "*Jhāna*", you have become unconscious according to the modern use of the word unconscious. So the first "*Jhāna*" is unconscious according to the modern thinking, so does second "*Jhāna*", third "*Jhāna*", fourth "*Jhāna*", and all these other things are all unconscious states. But from the Buddhist's point of view, those are not unconscious states; the real Unconsciousness is when that complete Activity we call Mind has stopped. That is the real Unconsciousness.

And from that state of Unconsciousness, now the Buddha comes back again from a state of not knowing anything, comes back to that threshold that I spoke of which is Neither Sensation Nor No Sensation, and then comes back to Nothingness, and from Nothingness to the Perception of Perception, and then there's Perception of Infinite Space. And from there on comes the fourth "*Jhāna*", third "*Jhāna*", second "*Jhāna*", and the first "*Jhāna*".

So there as I have said earlier, the first "*Jhāna*", there is what is called Questioning and Answering. What is this and even answer to it; that is found in the first "*Jhāna*". And that activity where you're "Questioning and Answering", what you see, is called "*Sañkhāra*", which is an activity, the activity of Construction because the Mind is Constructing Images.

That Construction part is there which is called the Verbal Construction. So the Verbal Construction is there in the first "*Jhāna*", and in the fourth "*Jhāna*" you have what is called in and out breathing. Now I said in and out breathing is not the same thing as what is today called Respiration. Respiration according to the scientific thinking is to break the molecule of sugar and water, and carbon dioxide is produced, releasing energy that is what is called Respiration. So Respiration is a chemical process, where the breathing in and out is something else.

So at that point, in the fourth "*Jhāna*" the breathing in and out stops, but Respiration is going on, that means you don't need much oxygen to continue existing of the body, to keep the process called Life going. You don't need that much of oxygen because that activity called Metabolism can go on, without that much. This is why some Yogis are supposed to be able to go deep into the water and remain for a long period. They are able to do that because oxygen is not necessary at that point if you are able to enter the fourth "*Jhāna*". Mysteries! Some people they say are able to be buried in the ground for a certain period there again breathing is not necessary.

So somehow there are three activities: one is the breathing in and out which is the physical activity, and the other mental activity is the last of the mental activities is that "Neither Sensation Nor No Sensation", the real mental activities "*Vedanā*" and "*Saññā*"; "*Vedanā*" refers to the Feeling; "*Saññā*" is Sensation. Both are really called Sensation today modern psychology. So the important thing is that these Activities are stopped. And gradually the Activities are started again. And only when you come to the first "*Jhāna*", all the three activities: Mental, Physical, and Verbal have started, and then you are able to perceive objects that is only at the first "*Jhāna*".

Now once you have come to that point; now in this *Paṭicca-Samuppāda*", we are talking about that, "*Avijjā Paccayā Sankhārā*", that means from that state of Unconsciousness, the Mental Activities begin. What is called Mental Activity is that Mental Activity: Sensation and Feeling. Then the Physical Activity of Breathing. And the Verbal Activity called Formation of Concepts: Questioning and Answering.

That Questioning and Answering is also really a Mental Activity, but it is called Verbal because that creates word; mentally you're creating a word. The moment you say this is a "glass". The word "glass" has been created, although you're not saying it with your mouth, the word has been created. So that is the meaning of "*Avijjā Paccayā Sankhārā*" means. From a state of Unconsciousness, Construction begins. Construction there means the Mental Activity begins; the Mental Activity of Construction begins.

And when the Construction started then these is "*Viññāṇa*"; "*Viññāṇa*" means Perception; Perception is there. So with the coming of Perception, once the Perception is there, what are you Perceiving? The question arises, if there is Perception, what are you Perceiving? So what you perceive is "*Nāma*" and "*Rūpa*". "*Rūpa*" is the Mental Image; "*Nāma*" is the Name given to the Mental Image. Whatever Mental Image you form, you also give a name to that Mental Image that is the "*Nāma*" and the "*Rūpa*". So once you have created "*Nāma*" and "*Rūpa*", then the next thing is that you have created the World because the World consists of various Images and Names you're giving to them: Name and Image and name giving to that.

So "*Nāma-Rūpa*" means what are the things that you are giving Names to, but you see with your eyes, what you hear with your ears, what you smell with your nose, what you taste with your tongue, and what you touch with the body. Those are the things that you are giving Names to. So the World that you are creating is simply the World created by what you see, what you hear, what you smell, what you taste, what you touch, and therefore we call them the Six Realms, the Six Realms, the Sensual Realms, Six Sensual Realms, "*Saḷāyatana*". The Six Sensual Realms and what we call the Six Sensual Realms is what we call the World.

So when we speak of a World, we think there is some entity there outside, but they're actually what is seen, what is heard, what is smelt, what is tasted, what is touched, we are putting together all those things and creating the World that we are aware of, that is what it means. And all that World that we have created is here inside our Mind not outside there. But we think it is outside there, but actually it is all inside. Those are Mental Images that we are thinking of.

Although I think I see you there, but I'm not seeing you there, I am only seeing pictures in my own Mind. I am only thinking that it is there. This is the problem.

So the World we have created is the “*Saḷāyatana*”, the Six Sensual Realms. And once we have seen the Six Sensual Realms, we have what is called Sense Experience. That is the Sense Experience we are having. So up to that point is the Cognitive Process, that is what is called Cognition, and that is what we call becoming Conscious. We have become Conscious of a World that is the real Consciousness at that point. Up to that point, it was just perception. So when the Perception Process is completed, we are supposed to be Conscious. And we are Conscious of the World; that is all. Still we are not conscious of a "Self". We are only conscious of a World outside. We have not become conscious of a "Self".

Now from here onwards, we are going to talk about how we become conscious of a "Self". For that we start with the Sensation. So there is when we are conscious, we also feel the sensation, and that sensation is of three kinds: Pleasant, Unpleasant, and Neutral. The Sensation we call it the Feeling, that Sensation really is the Feeling because we feel a pleasant sensation, we feel an unpleasant sensation, and we feel a neutral sensation. So we call it the Feeling rather than Sensation here.

So that Feeling results in a reaction to the Feeling in the form of a desire for the pleasant feeling, the hatred for the unpleasant feeling, and the neutral feeling doesn't make us desire or hate but we feel the Existence of something there. So the Feeling of Existence is there; the Feeling of Being. So that emotional arousal, that desire for the feeling the pleasant feeling is what is called, "*Kāma-Taṇhā*"; the "*Kāma-Taṇhā*" is the desire for the pleasant feeling. And the hatred of the unpleasant feeling is there, and the neutral feeling makes us think of Existence. So there is the desire for the Existence, that desire for existence is the "*Bhava-Taṇhā*". And the desire for the non-existence of the unpleasant feeling, so also that is in the form of desire, desire for the nonexistence of the unpleasant feeling that is "*Vibhava-Taṇhā*". So "*Bhava*" means existence of being.

Now with this comes another important thing; we are able to distinguish between Subjective and Objective because the desire is seen as something coming from within that is Subjective, and what we desire it's some object outside. So the desire is Personalized as "Mine", and the object is alienated as something outside: Other. What is "Mine" and what is not "Mine". What is not mine is the object; what is mine is the subject. And the subject is personalized; to say personalized means we say it is "Mine". Personalized is to say it is "Mine".

So with the Personalization comes what is called the Personality. What we have personalized becomes the Personality, and the Personality is "My-Self". The "Self" is simply what I have personalized. So what I have personalized becomes "My-Self". Did you understand that? So once the personality has come into being "I" exist. What do I mean by "I" exist. I exist in space and time. What do I mean by existing space; I am occupying space, a certain amount of space, which can be measured in terms of length, breadth, and height. What is it that occupies that Space? It is Body. So the Body has become "My-Self" which occupies Space. So the Body has become "My-Self" that occupies Space.

And not only that, it is also occupying Time. If it is occupying Time that means it has a Past, Present, and Future. How do I know about the Past, Present, and Future? How do I know that there is a thing called Past? Because of the Memory; I have a thing called Memory. It is the Memory that is producing what I called the Past. How do I know about the Future? Future is something that has not even come, but still I think of a Future that is all in my Imagination. Imagination is creating the Future. Memory is creating the past, but the Past, is it existing? Past is not something that existed; it's gone and finished; how can it be existing? And the Future has not even come. But still we are thinking of a Past, Present, and Future, and we are existing in the Past, Present, and Future.

And when we begin to think of the Past, the Past begins with Birth. And where is the Birth? What am I talking about? When I speak about Birth, I'm only talking about the Body. So the Body has become "My-Self". If the body is "My-Self" then the Birth of the Body is my Birth.

How did the Body become “My-Self”? By Personalized; I personalize the Body and call it “My-Self”. If I didn't Personalized the Body, then the Body is not “My-Self”. Because I Personalized the Body the Body has become “My-Self”. So the Birth of the Body has become my Birth. And then when I talk about the Future, the Future ends in Death. So the Death of the Body is the Death of “My-Self”. Because the Body has become “My-Self”, then the Death of the Body is “My-Self”. That is the death of “My-Self”. If the Body was not “My-Self” then the Death of the Body is not my Death.

And in between that Birth and Death, there is what is called Aging. So the Aging is again seen as the Aging of My-Self” because it is the Aging of the Body because I have called my Body “My-Self”. So the Aging of the Body is my Aging. So if I didn't personalize the Body, what will happen? If I didn't depersonalize the body, I will have no Birth; there will be no Aging; there will be no Death that is the immortality which is called “*Nirvāṇa*”. *Nirvāṇa*” is called “*Amata*”; “*Amata*” means Deathlessness or Immortality. So if you can really understand this properly and understand it fully, then all of your “Suffering” comes to an end. All the Suffering comes from the idea of a “Self” that doesn't really exist, you see.

But why is it that, now when you begin to understand this, you can see that that is true, but still although you have seen it, you are still thinking “I” am here. Why is this? Because the idea of “Self” is not an intellectual thing, the idea of “Self” is coming from that Emotion. It is the Emotion that started the Personalizing and the Personalizing lead to the idea of “Self”. It is all an Emotional thing. And therefore if you want to get rid of this Suffering, we have to get rid of the Emotion. It is only when the Emotions are removed, that all Suffering comes to an end.

And this Emotion is what the Buddha called “*Lobha*”, “*Dosa*”, and “*Moha*”, that same “*Taṇhā*”. The “*Taṇhā*” was that Emotional Reaction which we called “*Kāma-Taṇhā*”, “*Bhava-Taṇhā*”, “*Vibhava-Taṇhā*”. It is the same thing that the Buddha called “*Lobha*”, “*Dosa*”, and “*Moha*”. “*Lobha*” is the desire for pleasure, “*Dosa*” is the hatred of pain, “*Moha*” is the thought “I Am”. So it is only by removing those three things, “*Lobha*”, “*Dosa*”, and “*Moha*”, that all Suffering comes to an end.

Just by understanding it intellectually, this problem is not solved. Intellectual understanding is not enough. That emotional removal of the Emotion is the important thing; that is the important thing. So this is why we have to practice what is called the Noble Eightfold Path. The Noble Eightfold Path begins with right understand first. First we have to intellectually understand, that is the beginning. Once we have intellectually understood, the next step is "*Sammā Sankappa*". What is "*Sammā Sankappa*?" "*Sankappa*" simply means the Mental Image; "*Sammā Sankappa*", Mental Image. What is the Mental Image? We are having an Image of Ourselves in the Mind that is called the "Self-Image." Psychologists are aware of this, a thing called a "Self-Image" we are having in our Minds, "Self-Image." And this "Self-Image" is also based on Emotion.

So we have to change the "Self-Image", and that is we have to understand that this "Self-Image" is an Emotional Image that we are having. And that Image we are not only having "Self-Image", not only "One-Self" Image, we are having an Image that we think "We are", that is "One-Self" Image we have. That's why you look in the mirror, and you see yourself quite different that is not the Image you have. You are always thinking of a young person when you're old. That Image is the young Image; that is not really correct. That is the "Self-Image" we carry. But there is also an Image that we want to be; we also have an Image of what we want to be, and we try to act like that. So we are thinking say, when you are going into society or presence of other people, you try to behave in a different way. When you're alone, you're thinking of yourself in one way. But when you're going to meet other people, you begin to behave in another way, and not only that when you are going to work in your office, you have one Image. When you come home, you have another Image. And you are acting out all those Images, so you are also actors. Audience: "The World is the stage."

So you see it is very important to understand that all these Images we carry at different times, not the real Image, and even Image is only an Image, that is not the real you. So we have to understand this gradually and become aware of these things. We have to become aware of our Images, and think we are only creating Images in the Mind. This is only an Image.

It is only by seeing the Image as an Image that we can get rid of the Image. And also when we are angry we have one Image. When we are good we have another Image. You see every time our emotions change, our Image also changes, so it is also important to understand. So we must always, at the beginning get rid of the bad Images we have and cultivate the good Images until we ultimately give up all the Images. First we give up the bad Images we have and then we begin to cultivate good Images. **So we have to give up angry Images, we have to give up greedy Images, and Images like harming and hurting other people.**

All those, every action that we do carries a different Image, so we have to be aware of these different Images and always substitute a Good Image instead of the Bad Image. And it is by holding onto Good Images that is what we call Meditation. So Meditation itself is carrying Good Images in the Mind. So the more we think of Good Images like thinking of the Buddha, thinking of the “*Dhamma*”, thinking of the followers of the Buddha, the “*Arahants*”, and all the early followers of the Buddha, we begin to think of a Buddhist becoming a real Buddhist; this is the kind of person I should want to become. So we have “what we are” and “what we want to be”.

So what we want to be is the Good Image and what we are may be the Bad Image. So we have to get rid of the Bad Images, and we cultivate Good Images. So when we begin to do that we will be speaking in the good way, we will be acting in the good way, and we'll be living in a good way. So once we have come to that point, we have passed five steps in the Noble Eightfold Path, the Sublime Eightfold Way. And the next step is the Harmonious Practice; practice means we have to keep on Purifying the Mind. That is we are “Guarding the Senses” and taking our attention away from memories and focusing our attention on what is going on inside us.

These are things that we discussed earlier. So I don't have to go into detail explanation and then we begin to practice what are called the “*Bojjhaṅgās*” the Seven Steps in the Process of Awakening. And by practicing the Seven Steps, gradually we enter the Purity of Mind, which is the real “*Samādhi*”, the “*Satipaṭṭhāna*”, or introversion of attention. All these things come, and so ultimately all suffering comes to an end by following the Noble Eightfold Path or Sublime Eightfold Way. So I think that's enough for today.